nature net

The Nature Kenya Newsletter www.naturekenya.org Nov 03

GRASSROOTS

UK Minister for Environment visits Nature Kenya project at Kereita Forest

The UK Minister far Enviranment, Mr. Elliat Morley, had the oppartunity to interact with the Kijabe Enviranment Volunteers (KENVO) at Kereita Farest, and get first hand infarmatian abaut their activities.

KENVO is ane af the cammunity graups implementing a natianwide praject, funded by the UK Gavernment through the Darwin Initiative. The project aims at impraving the manitaring, management and canservatian actian af 60 biadiversity sites around the country. Nature Kenya, has been warking ta build the capacity of cammunity graups (Site Suppart Graups) such as KENVO, ta implement this project.

The project is spread aver three years and is particularly geared tawards monitaring activities, which include regular plant and bird surveys in the farest. KENVO has already established transects and permanent sample plats where they collect data regularly. The information callected is fed back inta decision-making to help in management of threatened biodiversity-rich areas such as Kikuyu Escarpment Farests where KENVO warks.

KENVO Chairman, Peter Manji, explaining some of the Darwin-funded project activities at Kereita Forest to the UK Minister for Environment, Elliot Morley

It was not all work and na play! Since the visit alsa caincided with WORLD BIRDWATCH weekend, the Minister - an avid birdwatcher - had the chance ta participate and spat some bird species at Kereita Forest.

TALKS & VIDEOS

Caecilians

An Illustrated talk

by John Measey
Institut de Recherche paur le Develappement, France

Mon 10 November '03,
5:30 p.m. Ford Hall, National Museums, Nairobi

Boulengerula taitanus

Alang with salamanders (Order *Caudata*) and frags (*Anura*), caecilians (*Gymnophiona*) complete the three Orders of living amphibians. Current taxanomy recagnises appraximately 160 species and six families af caecilians. These are distributed across the moist trapics, excluding Madagascar and Australasia.

Except far ane Sauth American family af semi and fully aquatic species (*Typhlonectidae*), all caecilians are believed to be terrestrial burrawers in soil for all or a substantial part af their adult life. They are elangate and completely limbless animals, with skin divided inta annuli, giving many species a superficial similarity to earthworms. In association with their burrowing habit, mast terrestrial species have sturdy, campact skulls, recessed mouths and reduced eyes sametimes cavered by the bones of the skull roof.

Althaugh most adult terrestrial caecilians are in the range of 200 to 500mm tatal length, the knawn maximum adult size ranges fram 112 mm in the Seychellean *Grandisonia brevis* ta 1520mm in the South American *Caecilia thompsoni*.

Kenya currently has three recagnised species, but taxonomic wark suggests there may be athers, which have yet ta be caught!

Beads in Africa

with Rhodia Mann

Thursday 20 November 03,
6:00 p.m. National Museum, Nairobi Louis Leakey Hall

Entrance fees • Members – 300/- • Non-member – 350/- • Children – 100/-

Rhadia, a recagnised autharity an the listing af beads, has travelled extensively in Africa and Asia.
(A Kenya Museum Saciety Pragramme)

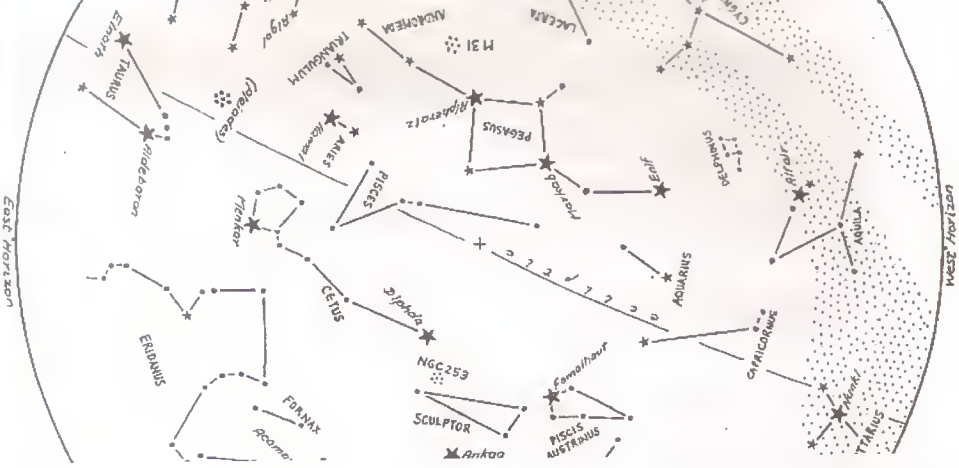
ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

A new discipline which links ecology with medicine and veterinary medicine was introduced, at a Darwin Initiative funded workshop, on Aquatic Ecosystem Health, held at Lake Bogoria, Kenya, from 14 – 18 July 2003. 29 participants attended the workshop from a wide range of backgrounds, including ecologists, veterinarians, museum personnel, students and staff from Lake Bogoria and other protected areas.

The aim was to seek valid parameters and measures for the "health" of ecosystems with discussion regarding the interactions between natural systems and human activity. The emphasis was on aquatic environments, with a particular orientation towards Lake Bogoria.

Further information about this workshop and plans for future activities funded by The Darwin Initiative are available from Dr David Harper (contact details below).

Dr David Harper, Senior Lecturer in Ecology
Department of Biology, University of Leicester, LE1 7RH
Email: dmh@le.ac.uk



November Sky, from The Safari Star Guide by Alex and Joy MacKay

EVENING SKY

By Ian MacKay and Fleur Ng'weno

Stars, Nov 03

The constellation Taurus is rising in the east as the constellation Scorpius is setting in the west. Spot the bright reddish star Antares in Scorpius in the western sky. A little later, look for another bright reddish star Aldebaran (the eye of the bull) in Taurus in the eastern sky - both among the brightest red stars we ever see. The two are never seen together at once for, as ancient Greek legend would have it; a great battle would follow such an occurrence should the two eyes ever see each other.

Planets, Nov 03

Mars and Venus are visible in the evenings of November and December. Bright, reddish Mars starts this month in Aquarius, high overhead, and is 3 degrees north of the moon on the 3rd. Mars is once again near the moon at the end of the month around 30th Nov - 1st Dec.

Bright Venus is seen low in the western sky after sunset. It is just north of the setting Antares on the 4th (look very early to see this), and is only 2 degrees north of the moon on the 25th. The small planet Mercury is also just below the moon on the 25th.

Moon, Nov 03

1 November *First quarter* (overhead at sunset); 9 November *Full moon*; 17 November *Last quarter* (rises at midnight); 24 November *New moon*; 30 November *First quarter* (overhead at sunset)

COURSES

Gardening & Composting

Friday 14 November 03

A one-day course at the Arboretum, beginning 8:30 a.m., suitable for gardeners. Learn how to

- care for your home garden
- select planting material
- mix colours of different flower types
- select and identify fertilizers and how they are applied
- take precautions in weeding, watering regimes
- trim and care for hedges
- turn litter into compost

Notebook, pen, lunch and Certificate of participation will be provided. Participants should bring own implements, including hoe, shovel and shears.

Charges are Kshs 800/- per person. *Book by 7 November 03,* at the Nature Kenya front office, to allow for printing of certificates and booking of lunches.

FIELD TRIP

To Farm in Juja

(southeast of Thika)

Saturday 24 November 03

The farm is on the banks of Ruiru River, not very far from Ol Donyo Sabuk, with plenty of intact bush habitat. Bird diversity is excellent, and includes the endemic Hinde's Babbler.

Bring picnic lunch, water and hat and meet at the National Museum, Nairobi car park at 7:00 a.m.

Book at the Nature Kenya front office with 100/- per person. Transport is by car pool and confirmation is reliant on available vehicles.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

BIRD RINGING

Meet at the Museums' Nairobi Botanic Garden, at 7:00 a.m. every Thursday.

SUNDAY BIRDWATCH

Members meet at the National Museum, Nairobi car park at 9:00 a.m. the third Sunday of every month, **i.e.16 November**. The members decide where to go. Bring lunch

TREE WALK

Guided Tree Walks in the Arboretum on the second Saturday and last Monday, i.e. **8 & 24 November from 9:30 a.m.** Meet at the Arboretum gate. *Those who are not members of FONA or Nature Kenya pay Ksh 100/- fee on arrival at the gate.*

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRDWALKS

Bird watching walks at sites in and around Nairobi. Meet at the National Museum car park every Wednesday at 8:45 a.m. Return about 12:30 p.m. *Those who are not members can get temporary membership at Ksh 100 per birdwalk, payable on arrival at the car park.*

ARABUKO-SOKOKE (COAST)

The Saturday birdwatch with the Arabuko Sokoke Forest Guides Association is on the first Saturday of each month i.e. **1 November, at 6:30 a.m.** from the Visitor Centre, Gede. Cost 100/- per person. KWS fees may now apply (100/- Citizens, 500/- Residents)

FFJ Bird Walk (Coast)

Friends of Fort Jesus birdwalks are held the third Saturday of each month, i.e. **15 November** Please call Marlene Reid on (041) 491 648 to confirm

Ngong Road Forest Walks (Nairobi)

The Ngong Road Forest Sanctuary Trust Nature walks are held on the first and third Saturdays of the month i.e. 1 **& 15 November, at 9:00 a.m.** Meet at the stairs leading to the Restaurant at the Racecourse.

Lake Victoria Sunset Birders (Kisumu)

The Lake Victoria Sunset Birders are a Nature Kenya Site Support Group and organise bird walks at sites in and around Kisumu every Friday of the month. For further details call 035 42952 or email wck@vicweb.net

DECLARATION

Nature Kenya does not accept any responsibility whatsoever in respect of negligence of any of its staff, volunteers or members organising the outings/trips or for any loss, injury, death or damage to property

CLASSIFIEDS

The Rift Valley Painters
and other Artists

Are having an **Exhibition**

At the Village Market
Opening 5:30 p.m. *Thursday 13 November 03* Continuing until *Monday 17 November 03*
10 :00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

L'ol Dacha

A retreat for nature lovers and birdwatchers just 50 minutes from Karen Country Club, on the Eastern Rift, Southwest of Nairobi.

Self catering cottages exclusively yours from 12,500/- for 2 nights. Sleeps up to 12.
Hosted visits, lunches/ sundowners can also be arranged.

Advance booking essential, email: caro@wananchi.com

Bird Hotline
3749957

Saddle-billed Stork, Bush Pipit *Endashont Swamp/Aug* Sunday birdwalk

Black-necked Grebe *L. Nakuru N.P./July* Woterfowls Counts

POPULAR BIRDS OF KENYA HANDBOOK - YOURS FOR FREE WITH THIS NEWSLETTER!

NOVEMBER DIARY

Sat 1	ASF Birdwalks & NRF walk
Sat 8	Tree Walk
Mon 10	Caecilians talk
Fri 14	Gardening & Compost Course
Sun 16	Sunday Birdwalk
Thu 20	Beads of Africa talk
Sat 22	Juja Farm trip
Mon 24	Tree Walk

Birdwalks every Wednesday Morning
Bird ringing every Thursday Morning

Editor, Catherine Ngarachu

Christmas Offer
Courtesy Tours & Travel
8 Days Mt Kenya Climb 22,000/-
8 Days Loita Hills & Maasai Mara 21,000/-
6 Days Maasai Mara, L. Nakuru, L. Naivasha
Daily departures to Mt Kenya, Maasai Mara, Samburu, Loita Hills, Kilimanjaro, Nakuru and L. Turkana
Call 020 341452 or 0733 907657
Email: Courtesytours@yahoo.com

PLANT INDIGENOUS !
TREES AND SHRUBS
ATTRACT BUTTERFLIES AND BIRDS
80 SPECIES INDIGENOUS TREES AND SHRUBS, WELL GROWN (1M+) IN LARGE POLYPOTS.
ORDER YOUR **YELLOW NANDI FLAME TREE.**
"LANDSCAPE" SIZE TREES ALSO AVAILABLE.
VISIT THE NURSERY FOR ADVICE OR TREES CAN BE DELIVERED.
CONTACT: CAROLE HEMMINGS
CROPWATCH TREE NURSERY, THIKA
067 47332
EMAIL: hemmings@africaonline.co.ke

Reach over 1000 members by advertising in Nature Net
Rates for Classifieds: • Up to 25 words 250/- • Up to 50 words 500/- Ads • 1/4 page @ 1750/- • 1/2 page @ 3000/- with image +500/-

Photo credit Okoko

WORLD BIRDWATCH

Please send WBW CHECKLISTS to the Nature Kenya front office as soon as possible or by *10 November 03*. Checklists will be handled by the Records committee of the Bird Committee, who may have a number of enquiries to complete, and the results may not be ready, to publish, until mid January 04.

Thank you, to teams and sponsors!

Nature *Kenya*

Membership form

Yes! ☐ *Start* ☐ *Renew*

my Nature Kenya membership

MAILING ADDRESS (BLOCK LETTERS)

Surname

First Name Ms/Mr/Title

Address

Tel (H) (O)

Mobile

Email

(**OPTIONAL** - but useful to us in planning)

Occupation

Age Bracket (tick) under 21( ) 21-35( ) 36-50( ) over 50( )

Country of Origin

Would you like us to share your contacts Yes/ NO

For Official Use Only Sub No. Recpt. No.

Mode Due Date Recpt Date

MEMBERSHIP TYPE	**Ksh Per Year**	**Enter Amount**
Full	800	
Sponsor	**3000**	
Family	1000	
Pensioners	300	
Students (Full time & undergraduate)	300	
Institutional (Libraries, schools, clubs)	1000	
Corporate (check with the office)		

ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Kenya Birds **(please tick if you would like to receive this Bird magazine)**	*Free of charge*
Journal of E.A. Natural History	1000
Scopus (Ornithological Journal)	500
World Birdwatch (the BirdLife International magazine)	1500
Succulenta East Africa	400

Friends of Nairobi Arboretum

Single - 400/-, Student - 250/-, School or Club - 800/-

DONATIONS ***Help us to do even more!***

5000/ 8000/ Other

Total

Send with cheque or money order to Nature Kenya